




Speech By
Donna Kirkland

MEMBER FOR ROCKHAMPTON

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**DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE PROTECTION AND OTHER LEGISLATION
AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mrs KIRKLAND** (Rockhampton—LNP) (4.37 pm): I rise today to speak in strong support of the Domestic and Family Violence Protection and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025. This bill is a critical step forward in strengthening Queensland's response to domestic and family violence. Each year we see communities come together for multiple events held throughout the month of May to recognise Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month and to raise awareness and to send a clear message that DFV in families and homes will not be tolerated. This year's theme is 'Breaking the silence, building safer communities', and that is exactly what this bill before us today does.

I am certain that across every electorate elected members stood before their communities in solidarity with the mantra to build safer communities, yet here in this chamber those opposite continue to bring argument against progressing real action that would answer the cries coming loud and clear from our communities to do something and to do more. I remind those in the chamber and the gallery that this bill has been prosecuted through committee hearings with community and industry stakeholders. The committee's recommendation states—

The complexity of domestic and family violence means that there is not a universal solution or 'silver bullet' that will solve the problem in its entirety. This report recommends that the Queensland Parliament pass the Domestic and Family Violence Protection and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025 as it proposes more protection to victim survivors and their families, reduces the risk of exposing victims to further trauma, and enhances the capacity of our police to meet the needs of our community.

I have risen today to not only support this bill but also bring clarity and confront and dispel concerns raised by critics and those opposite, particularly around the argument of misidentification within the police protection directions portion of the bill. Let me be clear: this bill does not ignore that risk; it confronts it head-on.

Throughout the bill it references provisions that are not token gestures but robust, multilayered protections designed to ensure fairness, accuracy and accountability. What this bill does is introduce a faster, more responsive tool while still preserving the right to review, appeal and correct. At any time within the first 12 months there can be a review of the PPD. Moreover, the bill mandates in section 192A a formal review of the PPD provisions after two years, ensuring that any unintended consequences are identified and addressed.

Over the past decade—that is, under the watch of those sitting opposite—domestic and family violence incidents in Queensland have surged dramatically by 218 per cent. In the 2023-24 financial year alone Queensland police responded to over 113,924 DFV related calls. That is more than 300 calls per day—each one a potential cry for help. The current system is slow, court heavy and often leaves victims exposed during critical windows of danger. This bill introduces the police protection directions—a mechanism for police to issue immediate, long-term protective measures without waiting for court proceedings. It is fast, it is practical and it saves lives.

In my electorate of Rockhampton, our community has seen too many lives lost to the destruction of domestic and family violence. They call out from the grave. Karen Gilliland was stabbed 26 times in front of her two daughters after years of abuse. Her mum, Cheryl, is forever without a daughter, and the lives of her children are unimaginably impacted. Chris Caitling died after he was stabbed in the chest by his wife while sitting in a lounge chair at his home in Rockhampton. Sue Duffy was punched in the face by her daughter's abusive partner. He left the 71-year-old lying on the floor and returned minutes later to stab her with a hunting knife. Sue's loving husband is without the love of his life and her daughter, Deborah—who was the intended victim that day—is, in honouring her mum, committed to a future where love overpowers darkness, where support is freely given and where smiles like Sue's continue to shine brightly, illuminating the paths of those who follow. This is from the ABC Capricornia news.

There are more; however, due to active court cases, I cannot continue to expand on the evidence of the atrocities that have tormented our communities. It is not just the immediate family, but work colleagues, neighbours, members of sporting clubs and extracurricular connections and schools that are affected. It is that devastation that we address here today in this bill.

It is not just about PPDs. It also includes a two-year GPS monitoring pilot for high-risk perpetrators, enabling tracking of high-risk perpetrators and direct safety tools, further enhancing real-time safety. It includes safety devices for victim-survivors, giving them a greater level of peace of mind to a life otherwise lived in a constant state of anxiety.

The bill also introduces a statewide expansion of videorecorded evidence-in-chief, VREC, to reduce the trauma in court. VREC prioritises dignity and psychological safety for our survivors. These reforms will work together to create a modern, trauma informed, victim-centric framework.

To oppose this bill on the grounds of misidentification is to ignore the very safeguards that it contains and to delay protection for those who need it the most. Let us not allow fear to override fact. Let us not allow hesitation to cost more lives.

I wish to take this opportunity to thank the Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence, the committee and those from our communities who bravely made submissions, along with the stakeholders and experts who live in this space, including the amazing team from CQ Healthy Families in Rockhampton. Thank you for all the work you have done and all you will continue to do.

This bill delivers on our commitment to the people of Queensland to put the victims first, holding perpetrators to account and restoring safety where you live. I commend this bill to the House.